

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 23, 2019

The Honorable Patrick M. Shanahan
Acting Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Shanahan:

We write to express our concerns with the recently announced decision for installations that are under consideration to serve as the headquarters for the new U.S. Space Command (USSPACECOM). The lack of transparency in the selection process is not reflective of the Administration's proposal for the new Combatant Command.

Basing decisions, particularly for a Combatant Command, rely on comprehensive and transparent selection criterion to provide maximum value and effectiveness for the military. Budgetary factors and quality of life elements, such as cost of living, schools, healthcare and housing, must be considered prior to selection. Tasking the current Air Force Space Command with developing the criteria for the basing decision raises serious questions. The very assets, which we intend to modernize, are being tasked with establishing USSPACECOM.

It is our understanding that the goal driving the reestablishment of USSPACECOM, and to create a new Space Force, is to improve our capabilities in this domain and go beyond the status quo. It is clear from the poorly managed process leading up to this decision that the Air Force intended to return USSPACECOM to its original headquarters location and status as an unofficial subsidiary of the Air Force. Of the shortened list of installations being considered, the majority fall within the area where this Combatant Command originally resided. Since 1983 when the original Space Command was established, much has changed. The reemergence of this combatant command should be a new attempt to defend our national security in an evolving threat environment. To match and exceed our competitors' abilities, we must take innovative steps toward shaping the space operations of tomorrow.

In order to better understand how the Department of Defense reached this decision and how it aligns with the direction of U.S. space operations, we ask you to respond to the following:

1. Please explain why the Air Force was selected to lead the basing process for the headquarters of a new Combatant Command. Additionally, please provide the guidance issued to the Air Force for making the basing decision.
2. Please provide the timeframe for interim operations of USSPACECOM and a justification.

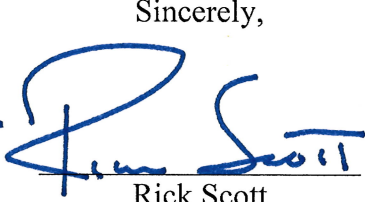
3. Will you, as the Acting Secretary of Defense, have final approval authority over the final selection?
4. Does the Department of Defense believe the Air Force correctly followed the Air Force Instruction 10-503 establishing the Strategic Basing Process?
5. Does the Department of Defense believe the basing decision for USSPACECOM headquarters met all necessary threshold requirements as required by the Strategic Basing Process?
6. Traditionally, through the Air Force Strategic Basing Process the proponent MAJCOM develops criteria for an enterprise-wide look following the development of requirements. Which MAJCOMs were involved in tailoring criteria for this basing selection? Who provided guidance on the development of the criteria? Who validated the criteria?
7. Did you approve the criteria that the Secretary of the Air Force used?
8. Did you approve the final candidate list issued on May 15, 2019? Who has final basing authority for establishing a combatant command and from where is that authority derived?
9. Considering the Space Command will impact all service branches, do you believe Army and Navy installations were provided adequate consideration under the criteria established by the Air Force?
10. If the Air Force proceeds with their current trajectory, will site surveys be conducted for all 14 installations that are either Department of Defense Space Installations or USSPACECOM components?
11. How are long-term savings from operations and personnel being considered? Over what length of time?
12. Since U.S. Space Command's disestablishment in 2002, the commercial space industry evolved from concept to commerce. The commercial space industry centers of research, innovation, production and operations have developed in geographically concentrated areas during the dormant stage of USSPACECOM. Where should USSPACECOM be located to best posture USSPACECOM's ability to leverage the emerging commercial space industry and their crucial role in the National Security Strategy?
13. Understanding the President's November 2018 order to establish USSPACECOM, it is imperative that our strategy be executed strategically, not hastily. As this new Combatant Command will be a vital part of our National Security Strategy, why is the Department of the Air Force's execution of the President's order being conducted on an expedited timeline instead of in a calculated and deliberative manner?

In addition to written responses, we request a meeting with you to address these topics, prior to the basing decision being finalized. Thank you for your consideration, and your service to our country.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator



Rick Scott
U.S. Senator



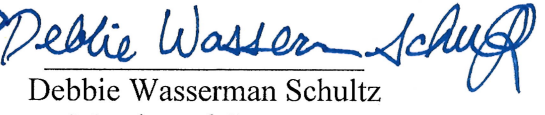
Charlie Crist
Member of Congress



Michael Waltz
Member of Congress



Matt Gaetz
Member of Congress



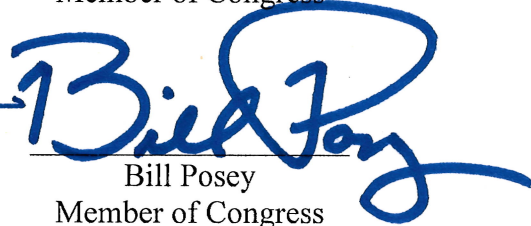
Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



Stephanie Murphy
Member of Congress



Ross Spano
Member of Congress



Bill Posey
Member of Congress



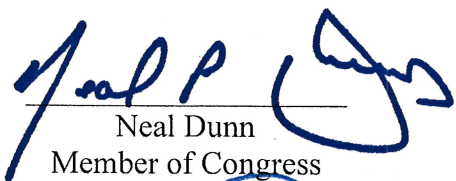
Darren Soto
Member of Congress



Gus Bilirakis
Member of Congress



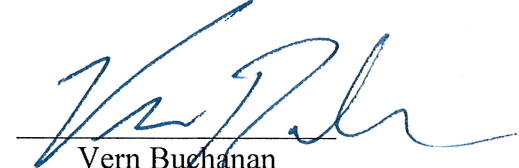
Mario Diaz-Balart
Member of Congress



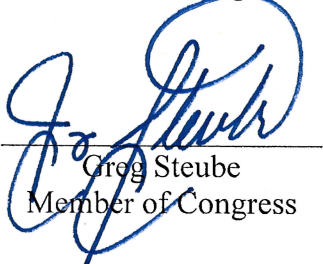
Neal Dunn
Member of Congress



Francis Rooney
Member of Congress



Vern Buchanan
Member of Congress



Greg Steube
Member of Congress



Daniel Webster
Member of Congress



Ted S. Yoho, DVM
Member of Congress

Frederica Wilson

Frederica Wilson
Member of Congress

Alice Hastings

Alice Hastings
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John Rutherford

John Rutherford
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Donna Shalala

Donna Shalala
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Brian Mast

Brian Mast
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Al Lawson
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Ted Deutch

Ted Deutch
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Val B. Demings

Val Demings
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Kathy Castor

Kathy Castor
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Lois Frankel

Lois Frankel
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Debbie Mucarsel-Powell

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